

# Snapshots 2003

August 22

collective goals and framework of that partnership.

The draft management plan addresses habitat improvement through the use of prescribed fire, monitoring of special status species, control of exotic species and regional coordination in support of federally listed species management. A prescribed fire consisting of about 539 acres will occur later this year to improve habitat.

Virtually an island, the Lathrop Bayou tract has retained much of the natural wet flatwoods character that has been lost throughout most of the surrounding area due to conversion to slash pine plantations. The abundance of special status plants, the presence of Bay County's only red-cockaded woodpecker colony, and the uninterrupted nesting of bald eagles at the site since at least the early 1990's illustrate the high quality of the habitat

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## Idaho

### FlowCheck—Checks the Flow of Erosion and Jobs out of Cascade

Innovative technology, partners, and the National Fire Plan were the key elements in creating the successful biomass breakthrough announced recently in Cascade, Idaho.

This new wood product provides jobs in rural areas and creates important value-added utilization of small diameter timber collected from forests thinned under the National Fire Plan.

Taking what was previously left in the woods, and getting forest industry, local and state officials together has resulted in the creation of FlowCheck structures from

ELWd Systems (pronounced "el-wood"). This provides land managers with a new tool to decrease erosion and increase infiltration on disturbed lands, including slopes, gullies and roadside ditches.

FlowCheck structures are manufactured by using small three to five inch diameter poles, assembled in three pieces to form an interlocking bioengineering tool. These form a highly effective erosion control barrier with two or more upslope poles capturing sediment and fine debris, while water is allowed to pass through. The triangular shape allows these structures to stay in place regardless of the slope. All poles and connectors are completely organic and provide an all-wood alternative to straw products and other overland flow control methods.

U.S. Senator Mike Crapo, Cascade Mayor Larry Walters, Valley County commissioners, and BLM Fire and Aviation Director Larry Hamilton were all present for the announcement of a government contract to utilize these structures for rehabilitation and erosion control after wildland fires.



*Fire and Aviation Director Larry Hamilton praises the public-private partnership that is using wood products formerly only seen as debris. Left to right are BLM Idaho Associate State Director Mike Ferguson, Boise National Forest Supervisor Dick Smith, Larry Hamilton, Cascade, Idaho Mayor Larry Walters, Senator Mike Crapo and unidentified participants during the ceremony.*



Highlighting BLM projects that support the National Fire Plan.

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Federal Fire Plan funds were granted to the City of Cascade to purchase a manufacturing facility now rented by Forest Concepts, LLC, creators of FlowCheck structures. Employees of Forest Concepts are creating a new market for small-diameter wood by producing habitat improvement structures out of the small roundwood, which was previously left in the forest because it was not economically feasible to remove or process.

After being introduced in 2001, the products have been utilized in Washington, Idaho, Arizona and Colorado. Currently the structures are made in Cascade as a public/private partnership between Forest Concepts, the City of Cascade, Department of Commerce, the US Forest Service's State and Private program, and the Bureau of Land Management.



*One of the flow check structures installed on a burned over slope.*



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